CHINA BULLETIN

of the

FAR EASTERN JOINT OFFICE

Division of Foreign Missions, NCCC/USA

156 - 5th Avenue, New York 10.

VOL. IV. NO. 7 March 29, 1954

Francis P. Jones, Editor

Wallace C. Merwin, Executive Secretary
Helen L. Tufts, Associate Secretary

FREEDOM THROUGH TRUTH

In the March 1 Bulletin I reviewed the first installment of Y. T. Wu's series of essays on Freedom Through Truth. The second installment appeared in the February 1 Tien Feng, a sermon on the subject, Who Caused the Death of Jesus? He begins by pointing out that the crucifixion was a part of God's plan; without the will of God not one hair of Christ's head would have fallen to the ground.

But humanly speaking he was brought to death by lawless men. Who was ultimately responsible for this tragedy? He considers in turn Pilate, Judas, the Jewish crowds, and Peter, and shows that while all of these were weak or fickle, and played their part in the betrayal of truth, still they all shrank from the last step, and would have prevented it if possible. It was the implacable hostility of the scribes and Pharisees that brought Jesus to the cross. These were the religious leaders of their time, but they were hypocrites, whose deeds did not match their religious professions. Against such hypocrites Jesus had poured out his severest denunciations. "They shall come from the east and the west, but the sons of the Kingdom shall be cast out." Who are the sons of the Kingdom? Those who say Lord, Lord, but do not do the will of the Heavenly Father. Who are those from the east and west? Those who do not have the name of the Lord upon their lips, and perhaps even think that they have no faith, but yet do the will of God.

Mr. Wu's last paragraph is particularly moving. "Since liberation we frequently hear Christians saying, Has Christianity any future? That is a strange question to be upon the lips of Christians. What has happened to our Christian faith? Do we believe that the eternal God who made heaven and earth exists today and will not exist tomorrow? Have we forgotten that the Christ whose life was full of mercy and truth is the same yesterday, today and forever? Do we believe that the Holy Spirit Who has hitherto enlightened and guided our hearts, will now suddenly stop working? Not so. The eternal Triune God does not change with the times. It is not the faithfulness of God that we need be concerned about, but our own faithfulness. If we have deeds to match our faith, if we make an effective witness for Jesus Christ, then all our anxieties will be found to have been needless."

The third essay appeared in the February 22 Tien Feng, under the title "All Good Comes from God." Having shown in the first two essays that good fruit is the necessary result of a good tree as regards Christians, he now raises the question of the application of this standard to non-Christians. If their actions are bad, the judgment is simple, but if their actions are good, how shall we judge them? In the same way that we judge Christian acts, for "God is the God of all men, and not just of Christians only. There is but one God, 'the Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all'. 'Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Many Christians mistakenly think that God can be bottled up, either inside the church, or inside some one sect. They think that only Christians can know God, and non-Christians cannot; or they even think that only their sect can know God and other Christian sects cannot. Not so, God is the God of all men, and therefore He reveals His truth to all men."

Issued about 20 times a year to keep mission boards and missionaries informed on Christian work in China. ANNUAL RATES: Domestic, $2.00; Overseas, Firstclass $4.00, Secondclass $3.00. Airmail $5.00 in 15 cent zone, $7.00 in 25¢ zone. Please send payments as due.

"Blessed is the man who believes in God. But who truly believes in God? The man who says Lord, Lord? No, the man who does the will of our heavenly Father. Therefore those who think they do not believe in God, but who truly do the will of God, do they not also appreciate the truth of God, and show forth His beauty and goodness? Scripture teaches this, for 'Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.'"

He then goes on to an interpretation of the story of the Good Samaritan. The point of the story is in the fact that the merciful man is a Samaritan, a man outside the religious pale. Jesus is teaching us that wherever we see good, whether in a Christian or in a non-Christian, we must recognize it as good and take it as our example. His illustrations of this point are, as would perhaps be expected, of a nature which Americans cannot accept: The Chinese heroes in Korea were mostly non-Christians, but their deeds were good; Eisenhower is a Christian, but his deeds were bad. But these mistaken applications do not necessarily affect the course of the argument.

He criticizes some Christians who say, "Men only ask whether a man's actions show love or not, but God asks what is the source of that love." But this is decidedly not the teaching of Christ, who determines the quality of a tree by its fruit. "The action of the priest and Levite was bad, and nothing can make it good; the action of the Samaritan was good, and nothing can make it bad."

He then takes up an objection to this position based on Paul's words, "If I give my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing," and shows that what Paul was speaking of has nothing to do with the present question. He then confirms his position by reference to the words of Jesus, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these," and by numerous quotations from the Old Testament prophets (in which he shows a very real familiarity with the prophetic literature).

"Does this mean that we deny the uniqueness of the Christian faith? No, we believe that Jesus Christ is our only Saviour; we believe that Christian truth can satisfy our deepest spiritual needs. The question is: Who is the real believer in Christ, and who is only a nominal and hypocritical believer? Those who by trust in the name of Christ are saved are not those who merely say Lord, Lord, but those who do the will of God. Through the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus gives us this command, 'Go and do thou likewise.'"

KUNGPAO

The February number of the Kungpao, monthly magazine of the Church of Christ in China, has just been received, the first number for over a year. It is a magazine of 32 small pages, half the size of the Tien Feng page. In this number the editor appeals for support from the subscribers, who number about 3,000. With this number of subscriptions expenses ran to 31 million yuan, and receipts were only 22 million. He doesn't say where he got the other nine million. Since, he says, the CCC has a total membership in China of about 160,000, it ought to be easy to increase the number of subscriptions. Tien Feng and Tien Chia (The Farmer) both have larger subscription lists.

The first part of the February number has several good sermon essays as suggestions for the spring evangelistic campaign, by Miss Helen P'eng, pastor of Ssushengtzu Church, Chengtu, Cheng Yu-kuei of T'uling, Hwcian, Kao Meng-hao of Tientsin, and Bishop Z. T. Kaung of Shanghai. The middle section has several political articles, and then at the end come several pages of church news.

MISSIONARY NEWS

Methodist missionary Joseph D. Beech, founder and former president of West China Union University, died in Chicago on February 24 at the age of 86.

CHURCH NEWS

In Hupeh the Wuhan churches (comprising Hankow, Wuchang and Hanyang) have a central Reform Committee with seven district organizations and 26 local branches, and a total of 428 members. These include all church workers, both paid and voluntary, and in addition 274 church members, or 15.2% of the total church membership of the area. That would seem to indicate an

tive membership now of about 1800. In the Wuhan public health cleanup eight persons were specially commended by the government as model workers, and four of these eight were Christians. Moreover three Bible women in Wuchang, Yuan I-yung, P'eng Su-ch'ing and Peh Yang-ch'ing received government prizes as model health workers.

Last year the responsible persons of the CIM, True Jesus Church and Methodist Church in Shaoyang, Hunan (Rev. Li Tao-ch'un, Elder Andrew Lui and Rev. Teng Lien-fang respectively) took the lead in organizing a Reform Committee for the churches of four counties: Shaoyang, Shaotung, Hsinshao and Lunghui. On September 22 39 delegates from more than 20 local churches, with other church-members to a total of 120 persons, met to organize this committee. A Committee of 13 was appointed, with Rev. Teng as Chairman and Rev. Li and Elder Lui as Vice-chairmen.

In the Wenchow Methodist Synod the Nanhsi District had a meeting in December with 92 representatives from 29 local churches. Many men and women offered themselves for voluntary work, and two young men asked to be sent to Nanking Theological Seminary for preparation for the ministry. 45 baptisms took place during the meeting, which, as the venerable Hsu Ting-ts'ung said, is "the largest number of baptisms at a district meeting in the 30 or 40 years of my experience."

Chouhsing in Chekiang had a big study meeting December 2-6 with about 600 in attendance from more than twenty local churches in the northern part of Yuyao County. Chekiang Reform Committee Secretary Rev. Tsai Wen-hao and Ningpo Secretary Rev. Chin Chih-lien were the speakers.

The Methodist Church in Wanhotien, Suihsien, Hupeh, has about 50 members. Seven of these have recently been specially honored by the government for their various achievements. It is noted that because of the loyalty of the churchmembers self-support is no problem in this church.

A retreat for churchworkers in Nanking on November 24 had the following speakers: Lutheran pastor Wang Yang, Quaker pastor Li Chi-an, Seminary President K. H. Ting, and "Brother" Lui Chih-peh.

The February 22 Tien Feng has an article introducing St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Shanghai. After a review of its history and organization we are told that it has three pastors (Retired Pastor Yao Chien-yang, Ch'en Yang-wei and Yu I-shou, two preachers and two janitors. It has also about a hundred voluntary workers. Its membership in 1953 was 1785, which includes 123 recently baptized. Ordinary church attendance runs between three and four hundred. The writer (unnamed) is specially gratified to report that their pastor Yu I-shou was ordained priest on February 7 along with another deacon, Shen I-fan, from All Saints Church. Bishop Mao presided and Bishop Robin Chen preached at this ordination service.

The election of Christians as people's representatives on the local level is now being reported in church papers from China. Rev. Hu Chu-jen of Wuhu was elected to the Wuhu Council, and YMCA Secretary Wang T'ung-tsung to the Wuchang Council. Eleven Christians were elected in Amoy and Kulangsu.

Huaitienchen Church in Shench'iu County, Honan, baptized over a hundred new members in February 1953.

The T'aolou Church, Wuyang County, Honan, was not established until after "liberation", so they have been carrying on in borrowed quarters. Recently land and money for a new church building have been contributed, and with the help of many non-Christians the building has now been completed.

The Mid-Hunan (Hsiang-chung) Synod of the Lutheran Church met in Changsha December 15-18, 1953, with 37 regular delegates present. Good reports were received from some of the churches. Yuanchiang reported over 80 baptisms in the past two years; a village church in Lienyuan County with about a hundred members reported over 400 inquirers enrolled. In the business session such questions as how to choose Seminary students, the ordination of pastors, etc. were discussed, indicating that the church in Hunan is very much a going concern.

The Ch'iaossu Church is a small country church near Hangchow (CCC). It has a history of some forty years, and in 1949 had a membership of 93. But under the leadership of the Reform Committee,